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ABSTRACT

The "mini-unit" for gifted students at the elementary and middle or junior high school levels presents 27 activities based on B. Bloom, E. P. Torrance, and F. Williams' models of instruction. Activities focus on the theme of the donkey and include such tasks as using nonverbal communication to make a model donkey; brainstorming resources, references, and materials for independent study on the donkey; visualizing imagery while listening to music; writing and illustrating a story about a donkey; composing poetry; writing skits; and reading stories about donkeys. (CL)

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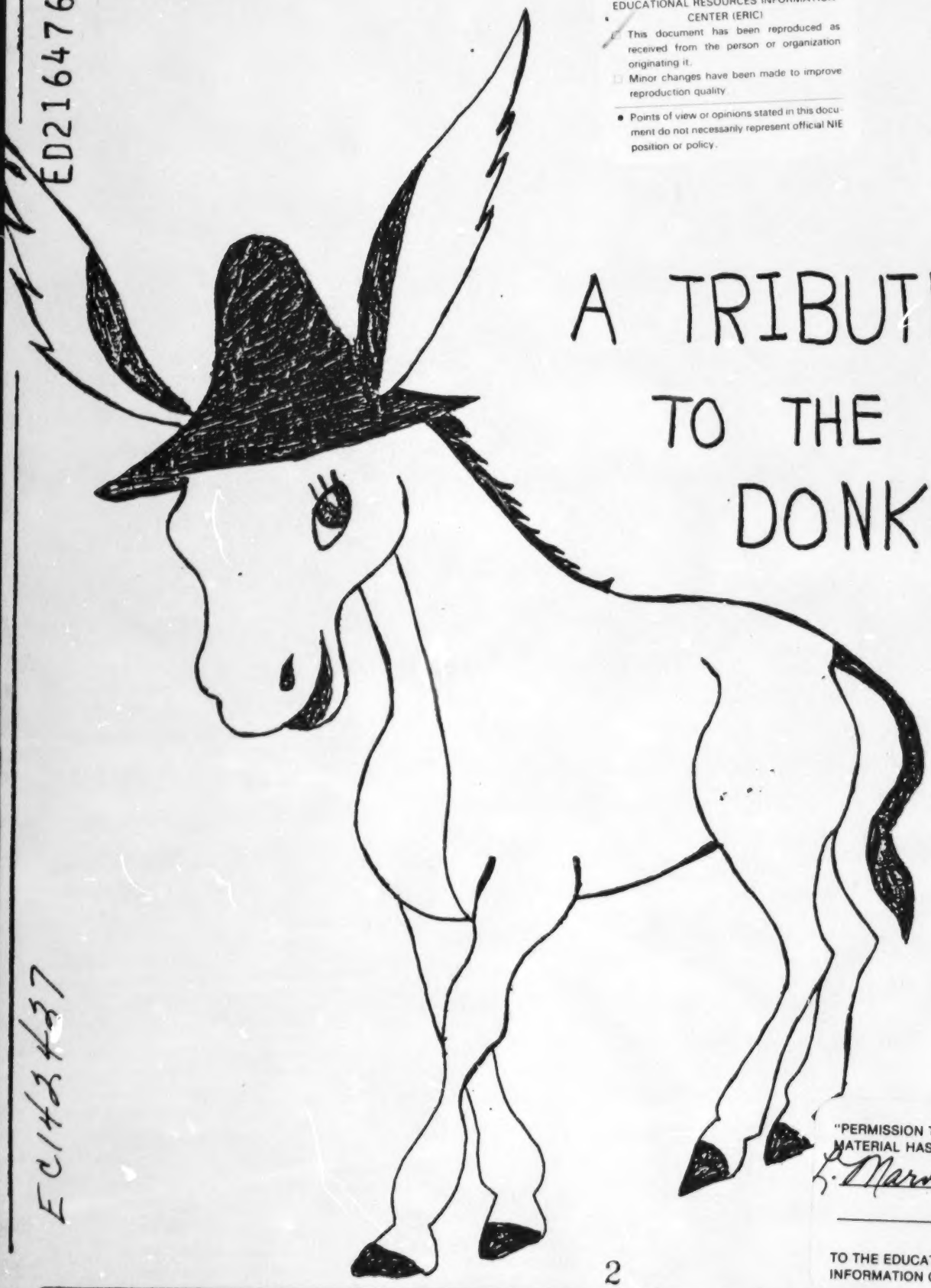
# A TRIBUTE TO THE DONKEY



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A Tribute to the Donkey

By Dr. L. Marvin Marion
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Dr. Leonard Marvin Marion, an Associate Professor of Education at Missouri Western State College in St. Joseph, wrote a syllabus and compiled a bibliography for Teaching the Gifted, Creative, and Talented Student implementing the first methods course on GCT to be taught at that institution the summer of 1980.

He has taken some graduate courses in Gifted Education, has attended several conferences and conventions, subscribes to numerous gifted and talented periodicals, and has accumulated an enormous amount of material and a large number of books on GCT. He utilizes the "learning center" approach in teaching the college methods course.

During the 1980-81 and 1981-82 school years he has presented several workshops on gifted and talented, talked with Northwest Missouri principals about writing a grant proposal for funding a gifted and talented program in their respective school, supervised Missouri Western State College elementary education majors in their Experience in Teaching II in the gifted and talented program in St. Joseph Public Schools, and was interviewed by KQ Channel two television in St. Joseph. The news reporter also videotaped one of his workshops for teachers in an area school system. She devoted a segment of the news to gifted education each evening for one week in February 1981.

Acknowledgements to:

My wife, Mrs. JoAnn Marion, Assistant Professor of Education at Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville, Missouri for the art work, a donkey puppet and her input.

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Mrs. Lucie Nelson, typist.

## Objectives

1. The student will demonstrate that he recognizes goals and objectives of a group by working cooperatively with his peers in group activities.

2. The student will demonstrate that he can work effectively on activities involving the six levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.

3. The student will generate appropriate pantomime or charades as students guess by writing correct response.

4. The student will construct a donkey by means of nonverbal communication working effectively in groups.

5. The students will decide on a list of references to utilize in the unit by means of group decision-making.

6. The student will utilize visual imagery in some activities which will incorporate Williams and Torrance's Models.

7. The student will demonstrate his ability to recognize skills and creativity of his peers by sharing finished product or activities with others.

Have fun with this unit!

A Tribute to the Donkey

The following mini unit based on Bloom, Torrance, and Williams' Models was written to be used in teaching gifted and talented students. Since the donkey seems to be the most neglected animal in American schools, the author chose this theme. A variety of activities and learning center tasks was included. The unit could be used with gifted and talented students at the elementary and middle or junior high school level depending on the variation of activities and tasks from a simple to a more complex level.

Activities

1. Divide the class into groups of five or six students (fewer, if desired) depending on class size. Hand one student in each group a slip of folded paper with the word "donkey" written on it. He should not let anyone see the word. That student is the leader. He will pantomime or play charades with the group in a circle, but all communication is non-verbal. Students will write questions or guesses to show the leader. After each group has guessed, proceed to Activity 2.

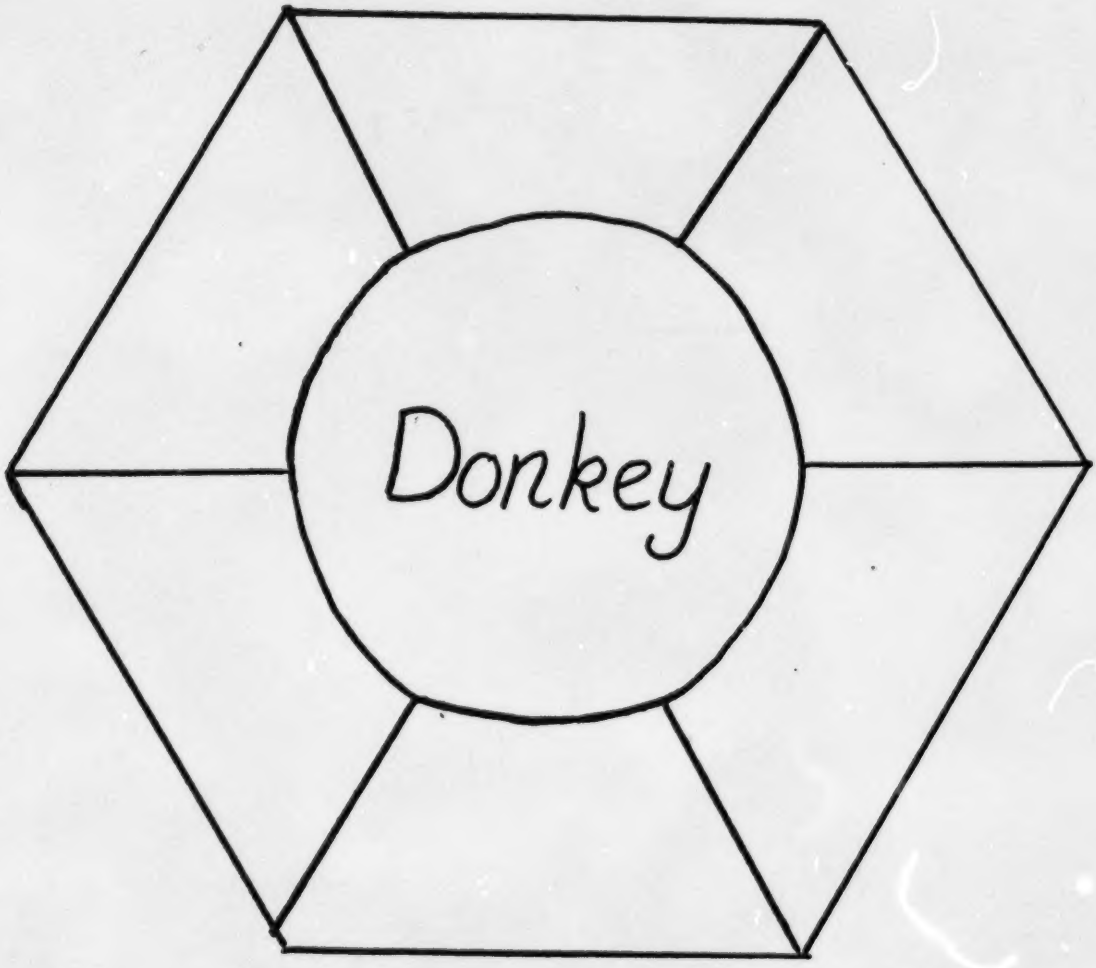
2. Students work together in same groups still using nonverbal communication to make a model donkey. The donkey may be constructed from any one of the following: modeling clay, papier mache, or newspapers and tape. After completing the model, students decide as a group on a name for the donkey and justify why they chose that name. List three characteristics of your donkey, and tell what it eats.

3. After finishing the construction of the donkey each group goes to a learning center and selects an activity card of sample verbs and nouns from one level of Bloom's Taxonomy. As a group they write at least three good questions for an independent study. Each group continues going back to the learning center to collect verbs and to write questions until all six levels of Bloom's Taxonomy have been covered. This will constitute their guide for small group work or an independent study on the donkey.

4. Brainstorm:

Make a list of sources, references and materials for an independent study on the donkey unit. (Fluency and Flexibility).

5. Go to the listening center and play "On the Trail" from "Grand Canyon Suite." Close your eyes and use your visual imagery. After listening to the recording, list on a sheet of paper (individually) all the images created in your mind. As a group use the following design. Place the word "donkey" in the center. Working with a partner list at least two descriptive words in each block around the circle. Use one of your words which best matches that of your partners' in the six blocks around the circle to describe the word "donkey." Write a short paragraph using the words to describe your visual images. (visual imagery, fluency, flexibility, elaboration, originality, creative writing, vocabulary development).



6. Select the following books:

   Sylvester and the Magic Pebble, by William Steig, and The Donkey Prince retold by M. Jean Craig. Scan both books.

   A. Contrast the parents of Sylvester with the parents of the Donkey Prince. (Evaluation)

   B. Write a sentence relating the theme of the book. (Application)

   C. Compose a new beginning for The Donkey Prince. (Synthesis)

   D. If you were the Donkey Prince how would you have felt as a child toward your parents and classmates? (Divergent)

   E. If you had been Sylvester, how would you have felt as a rock? (Divergent)

7. Design a political cartoon about a donkey and an elephant. (Synthesis and Originality).

8. Review the article on the origin of the two political party emblems and their creator, Thomas Nast, in the October 1980 issue of Cobblestone. Design a new emblem for each political party. (Originality and Synthesis).

9. Write and illustrate a story about a donkey. (Synthesis, fluency, flexibility, elaboration, and originality).

10. The song, "Sweetly Sings the Donkey," is an anonymous three-part round from England. Go to the listening center and listen to a tape or recording of the song.

    The song, "Donkeys and Carrots," is a round from Belgium. Listen to the song on a tape or a recording. Both songs are taken from the book, Rounds about Rounds.

    Sing one or both songs. Work as a group to compose a song about a donkey and illustrate with appropriate drawings. (Originality, elaboration, synthesis).

11. Song, "Once There Was a Donkey," is a lively song in three phrases as a two-part round. The words are taken from the book, Exploring Music.

The song, "The Donkey," is a Bohemian Folk Song. The recording, "The Little White Donkey," by Ibert gives the rhythm of the donkey's footsteps. The song is taken from the book, Discovering Music.

Go to a listening center and listen to the songs on tape or record. If you know the tunes to the songs sing them. Try composing your own song about a donkey. (Originality, Synthesis).

12. Compose a preposition poem about a donkey. (Originality) The format consists of prepositional phrases at the beginnings of lines to signal the writer to continue writing. Students create a poem in which the first five or six lines begin with prepositional phrases and the last line contains the subject and verb.

An example is:

On the mountaintop,
In the meadow,
Under the pine scented tree,
Beside the cool sparkling brook,
With head erected high in dignity,
Stands my November 1980 defeated donkey.

The prepositional poem pattern is found in: A Writing Guide for Missouri Schools K-12.

13. Compose a Found poem about a donkey or about a donkey and an elephant. Combine your poem with that of one or two other people in your group for a duet or trio reading. Each person takes turns reading a line of his poem fusing the poems into one. (Fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration). Found Poems are poems which happen to be around. They contain words already written somewhere such as on a menu, labels, newspaper headlines, advertisements, and street signs. A Found poem can also be composed by listening and watching television or watching people and animals.

Lobe Lurie, a California poet, has written and published several Found poems.

Definition for Found poem taken from, Pass the Poetry, Please!

14. Compose a limerick about a donkey. (Originality)

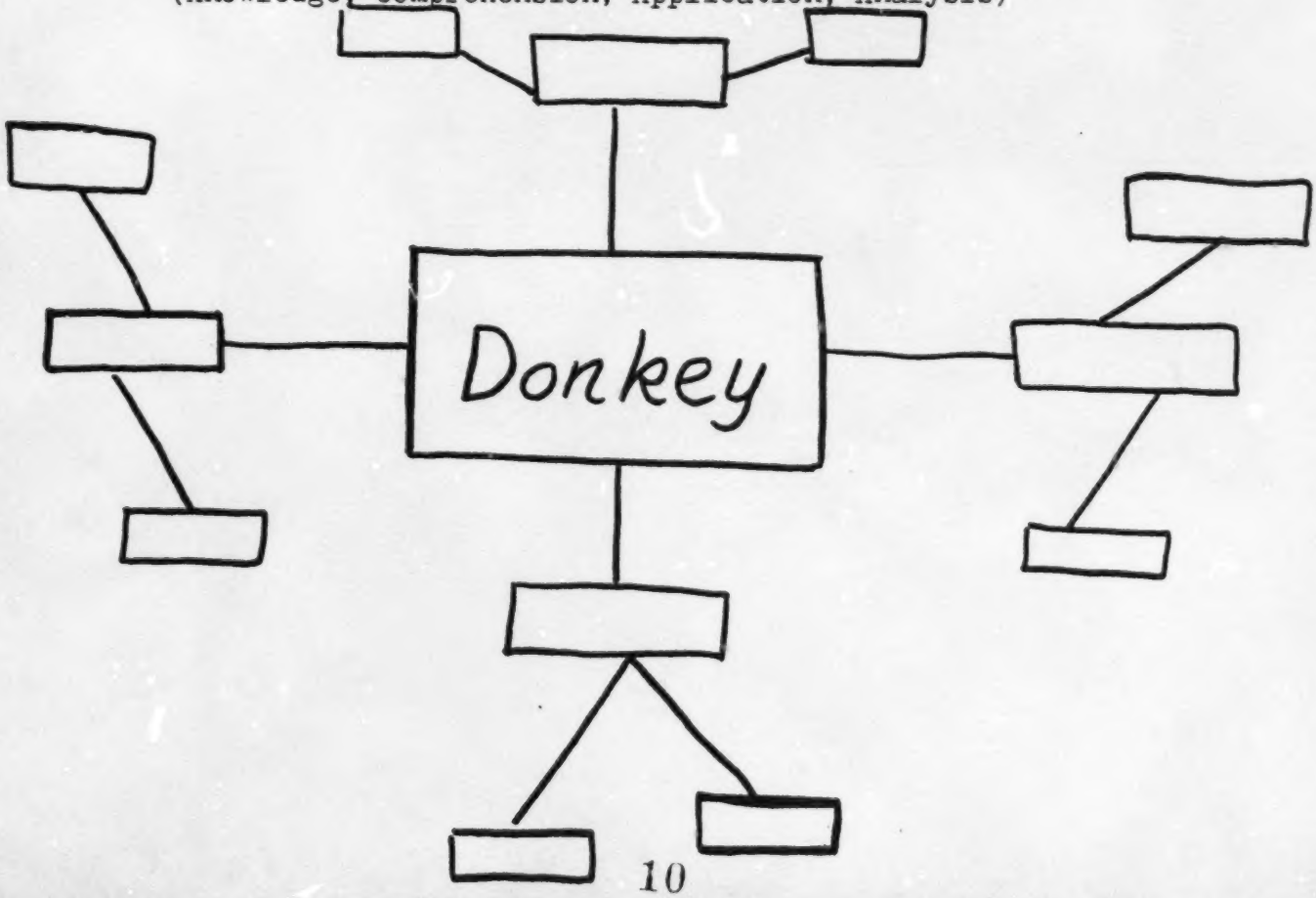
The limerick is a combination of a triplet and a couplet. The rhyme pattern is A-A-B-B-A. Three metrical beats are in lines 1, 2, 5 and two in lines 3 and 4. It is a nonsense poem. An example is:

There was a man named Thomas Nast
Who was so exceedingly fast
Since democrats like dunkeys*
More than munkeys*
He designed an emblem that would last.

*Note the change in spelling to make the two words rhyme.

15. Write a skit or monologue for a donkey puppet. (Originality)

16. Based on your acquisition of knowledge and expanded vocabulary from the donkey unit, each group will work with strips of paper to web the word "donkey." Use the following pattern. After each group finishes, let the students in each group keep circulating until they have seen the webbing of all groups. Give them a chance to add to each group's webbing. (Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis)



17. Read Brighty of the Grand Canyon by Marguerite Henry.

A. Draw a mural depicting Brighty's journeys through the canyon.

B. What is the theme of the book?

C. Explain the symbolism of the Mark of the Cross appearing on the donkey.

D. What is the political irony of President Theodore Roosevelt dedicating the Grand Canyon and his admiration for Brighty?

E. Compare the following characters:

Old Timer with Uncle Jimmy Owen.

F. Contrast these characters:

Old Timer with Jake Irons, Homer Hobbs with Old Timer, Homer Hobbs with Jake Irons.

G. Once again listen to the recording, "The Grand Canyon Suite". Imagine that Brighty is the donkey.

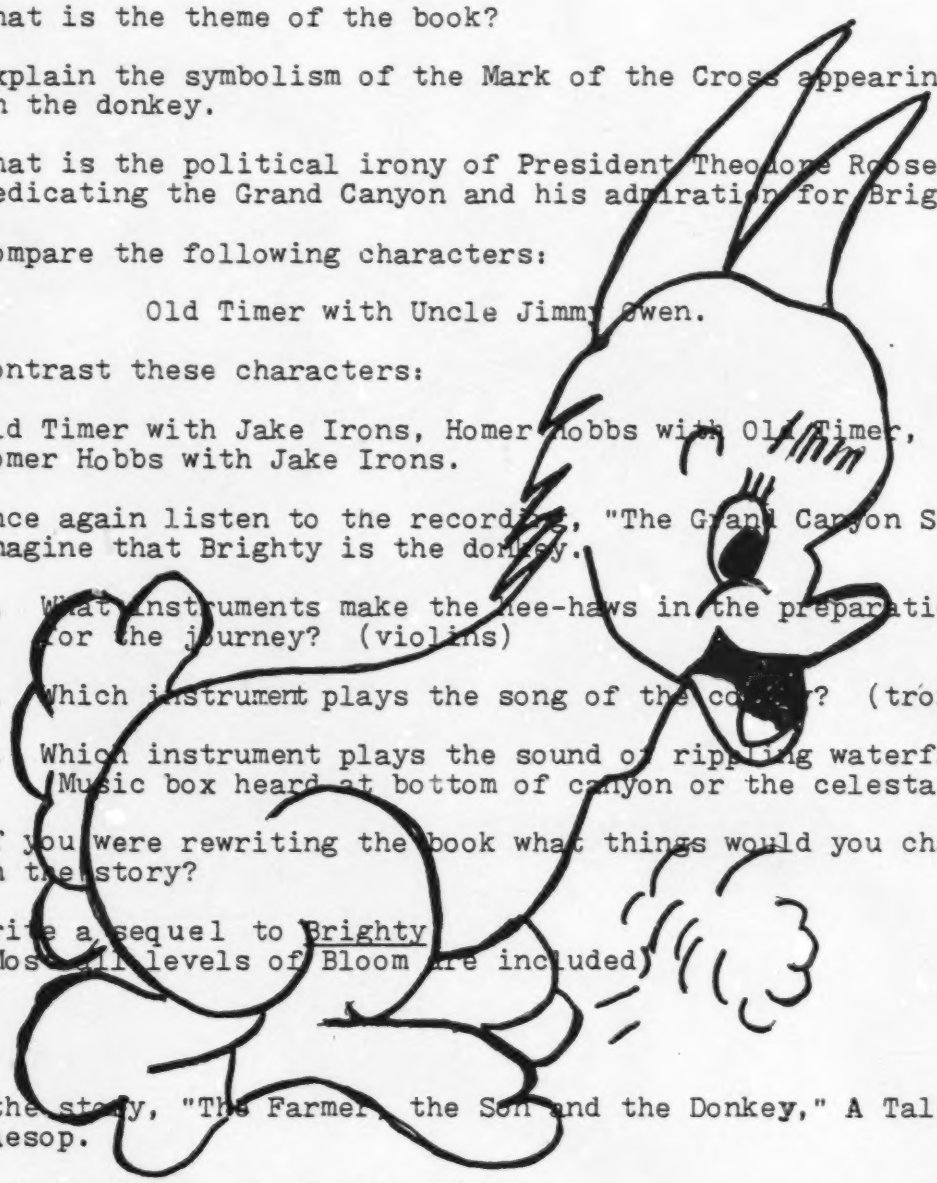
1. What instruments make the hee-haws in the preparation for the journey? (violins)

2. Which instrument plays the song of the cowboy? (trombone)

3. Which instrument plays the sound of rippling waterfall? (Music box heard at bottom of canyon or the celesta.)

H. If you were rewriting the book what things would you change in the story?

I. Write a sequel to Brighty
(Most all levels of Bloom are included)



18. Read the story, "The Farmer, the Son and the Donkey," A Tale from Aesop.

A. What is the moral of this fable?

B. Do you think there are people today who act in the same manner as that of the farmer and his son? (Divergent question)

C. Write your own fable about an animal. (Synthesis) Design pictures to accompany the story.

19. Listen to the recording, "Carnival of the Animals."

    Did you hear the braying of the donkey? Could you pick out any other animals from sounds made in the number?

20. Read the story, "The Bremen Town Musicians."

    A. What is the theme of the story?

    B. Write a sequel to the story.

    C. Construct a puzzle for this story. See if your classmates can put the puzzle parts together. (Analysis, Synthesis).

21. Write a newspaper article based on one of the books suggested in this unit. Be sure to include the five W's and the H. (Originality).

22. Write a conversation involving characters from two or more of the donkey books you have read in this unit. (Synthesis).

23. Using creative dramatics roleplay as a small group(s) characters and scenes from your favorite donkey book or story. (Creativity).

24. Roleplay a scene involving Thomas Nast being interviewed on television today. As the interviewer decide what questions you will ask him. (Creativity).

25. If you are a collector, you may be interested in collecting small donkey figures, carts, napkin holders, toothpick holders, or donkey puppets. (Affective)

26. Play the recording of the song, "Tinga Layo." Sing the song. Compose a song using the same pattern and rhythm and sing it. If anyone plays an instrument, have him/her to play the new composition. (Synthesis)

27. As a culminating activity, present a program based on your activities and invite your parents and students from another grade. (Evaluation)

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